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Senate

The Senate met at 3 p.m. and was called to order by the President pro tempore (Mr. GRASSLEY).

PRAYER

The Chaplain, Dr. Barry C. Black, offered the following prayer:

Let us pray.

Eternal God, You store up blessings for all who honor You. Lord, if angels must veil their faces in Your presence, shouldn't we mere mortals embrace reverential awe?

Today, empower our Senators to be strong and courageous as they make loyalty to You their highest priority. Smile on them with Your blessings, for You are the Author and Finisher of our salvation. Lord, grant that our lawmakers may know what is conducive for Your glory.

Today, we lift our hearts in ceaseless praise to You, our strong deliverer.

We pray in Your magnificent Name. Amen.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The President pro tempore led the Pledge of Allegiance, as follows:

I pledge allegiance to the Flag of the United States of America, and to the Republic for which it stands, one nation under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. HAWLEY). The Senator from Iowa.

Mr. GRASSLEY. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent to speak for 1 minute as in morning business.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

TRIBUTE TO EVELYN BIRKBY

Mr. GRASSLEY. Mr. President, I pay tribute to a remarkable Iowan. She is one of the longest serving newspaper columnists in America.

She has an uncommon work ethic, having never missed a deadline in 70 years. Her weekly commentary in the

Shenandoah Valley News has blanketed her close-knit community in southwest Iowa for seven decades.

Now—get this—at age 100 years young, Evelyn Birkby—mother, farmer's wife, radio commentator—better yet, radio homemaker for KMA Radio—columnist, and author—is now retiring.

Her readers will miss her byline and storytelling. Her neighborly columns about ordinary life in rural America have brought extraordinary joy to generations of Iowans.

I yield the floor.

RESERVATION OF LEADER TIME

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the leadership time is reserved.

CONCLUSION OF MORNING BUSINESS

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Morning business is closed.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

EXECUTIVE CALENDAR

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the Senate will proceed to executive session to resume consideration of the following nomination, which the clerk will report.

The senior assistant legislative clerk read the nomination of Andrew Lynn Brasher, of Alabama, to be United States Circuit Judge for the Eleventh Circuit.

RECOGNITION OF THE MAJORITY LEADER

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The majority leader is recognized.

KENTUCKY FLOODING

Mr. McCONNELL. Mr. President, this afternoon, my staff and I are continuing to monitor widespread flooding across Southeastern Kentucky. Heavy rainfall damaged homes, businesses,

and infrastructure in those counties. Our Governor declared a state of emergency and mobilized a full-scale response for the areas in need.

I am particularly grateful to the first responders who have already rescued and evacuated many Kentuckians from harm's way. Their professionalism and courage have helped to keep this situation from becoming even worse.

Many roads remain closed and hundreds of residents are still without running water. Worse still, more rain is in the forecast in the coming days. This crisis, unfortunately, is not over yet.

My office stands ready with local, State, and Federal officials to help families and communities however we can, as Kentuckians endure the remaining flooding and begin the recovery process.

IMPEACHMENT TRIAL ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

Mr. President, on a totally unrelated matter, as the impeachment trial ended last week, I offered preliminary thanks to a few of the individuals whose outstanding service helped the institution fulfill this unique and challenging responsibility.

Rising to the occasion for just the third time in Senate history, it took herculean efforts from a long list of hard-working and dedicated people. So I would like to take a little bit of time this afternoon to share some Senate gratitude that too often goes unexpressed.

After I name some key individuals and offices within the Senate, I will submit a fuller list for the RECORD.

First, thanks to the Sergeant at Arms, Mike Stenger, and his entire team, especially the tremendous efforts of our Deputy Sergeant at Arms, Jennifer Hemingway; our protocol experts, including Becky Schaaf and Carly Flick; Krista Beale and Bob Shelton of Capitol and Chamber Operations; and, of course, Grace Ridgeway and her remarkable Capitol Facilities team.

Many other offices had to go far above and beyond their normal duties:

• This "bullet" symbol identifies statements or insertions which are not spoken by a Member of the Senate on the floor.



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